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Report on the progress of gender equality work in UNICEF

Summary

This report is submitted pursuant to Executive Board decision 2010/7, which, inter alia, requested UNICEF to report on the progress of its gender equality work, in line with the medium-term strategic plan at the 2011 annual session of the Executive Board. This report may be read in conjunction with the annual report of the Executive Director (E/ICEF/2011/3) and the data companion thereto.

* E/ICEF/2011/8.

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Background

1. UNICEF commissioned a comprehensive evaluation of its performance in gender policy implementation in 2008. A management response and initial one-year plan were developed to address the evaluation's recommendations in 2009. A Gender Equality Task Force, chaired by the Director of Policy and Practice and comprising senior staff members from regional offices and Headquarters, was established to guide and monitor the implementation of the plan.

2. Supported by an allocation of $4.25 million from the Office of the Executive Director, the implementation of the one-year plan led to a number of important results. UNICEF fully updated its Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Girls and Women, and issued it in May 2010. It formulated the operational guidance for gender mainstreaming in all focus areas of the medium-term strategic plan (MTSP), including a focus on engaging men and boys to promote gender equality. Programming for gender in humanitarian response was addressed, including through strengthening of the gender component of the revised UNICEF Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action.

3. A Global Consultation was held in early 2010, bringing together staff from all regions and levels, to review progress against the one-year plan and to discuss ways forward. This led to the development of a three-year Strategic Priority Action Plan (SPAP) on Gender Equality, 2010-2012. The SPAP builds upon the immediate actions taken under the one-year plan and lays out eight areas of change to transform UNICEF into an organization of excellence committed to promoting gender equality: (a) accountability and strategic framework; (b) capacity and knowledge; (c) leadership, influence and advocacy; (d) programming; (e) "doing what we advocate"; (f) partnerships; (g) financial resources; and (h) communications. It covers all aspects of UNICEF work, including in emergency and development contexts, as well as advocacy and operations. Responsibility for the SPAP and its benchmarks rests with all parts of the organization; regional offices and headquarters divisions have been reporting on its implementation since it was launched in mid-2010. The intensive focus on gender equality throughout the work of UNICEF now forms a key component of the organization's refocus on supporting and promoting equity in the achievement of development results.

Strengthened institutional systems and capacity

4. In the follow-up to the gender evaluation, UNICEF invested in strengthening systems and capacity in mainstreaming gender for programme results and endorsed the continuation of the Gender Equality Task Force, which monitors the implementation of the SPAP and regularly reports to the Executive Office and Global Management Team.

5. After reviewing the experience in other agencies, UNICEF has put in place a gender equality marker (GEM) which tracks the allocation and expenditure of resources in relation to gender-focused programme results. The first full year of implementation of the marker is 2011; regional offices are working together with headquarters divisions to review the experience so far and to refine the marker and

its use for future years.[1] UNICEF is collaborating with UN-Women and other partners in the development of a United Nations system-wide marker based on its own tool and experience and that of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC).

6. A self-assessment survey was carried out in 2009 to establish a baseline on staff perceptions of their knowledge, competencies and skills in mainstreaming gender and promoting gender results in UNICEF-assisted programmes. The survey was conducted again in 2010, and will continue to be carried out annually to monitor progress in relation to staff capacity and awareness.

7. Country offices are expected to ensure that gender reviews of UNICEF-assisted country programmes are undertaken on a regular basis. In response to the results of these reviews, specific actions are being taken to better mainstream gender in individual country programmes, including full-fledged office strategies, complementing the organization-wide SPAP. For example, following the conduct of a participatory gender audit, the Philippines country office adopted a ten point plan of action to promote gender equality. Several regional offices have adopted gender strategies that reflect the regional context. The Turkey and Kyrgyzstan country offices conducted gender-training workshops for staff as a follow-up to gender reviews of their country programmes.

8. In addition, based on previous experience and as a follow-up to gender reviews, offices have strengthened their gender-focal-point mechanisms by moving beyond the appointing of single focal persons to forming task teams or working groups, involving staff from different disciplines, and by improving accountability through the inclusion of senior-level staff. Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka, for example, have formed gender task forces, ensuring a gender balance, equal representation of national and international staff, and inclusion of staff from all sections. The Middle East and North Africa Regional Office (MENARO) has established a regional office gender coordination committee, comprising the chiefs of section, under the leadership of the Regional Director and her deputy. Similarly, in the East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO), all section chiefs serve as gender focal points under the Deputy Regional Director.

9. Several regional offices — the Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA), MENARO and EAPRO — provide updates on gender issues, including implementation of the SPAP, as a regular agenda item of regional management team (RMT) meetings. In EAPRO, gender issues have been part of discussions on human resources as well as programmes, including within the context of the UNICEF refocus on equity. In South Asia, RMT sessions have led to agreed action points to keep the gender mainstreaming agenda moving forward and visible through regular monitoring and discussions within country offices. In MENARO, strategic sessions on gender have been conducted in three RMT meetings since 2009. Gender equality and gender mainstreaming have also featured as an agenda item at country management team (CMT) meetings in all regions.

10. To strengthen capacity to promote and support gender equality results, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UN-Women and UNDP developed an e-learning course, "Gender Equality, UN Coherence and You", which was launched in March 2011. This course is open to all staff and establishes a minimum standard of introductory orientation on gender equality and United Nations system coherence. Taking the course will be a prerequisite to enrolling in

[1] Initial analysis of 2010 programme allocations in terms of the GEM is provided in this report.

UNICEF programme process, training workshops. The course, the first such interagency learning facility on gender, is now being used as a basis for system-wide training. The UNICEF Programme Policy and Procedures Manual has also been revised to include a stronger gender focus; the training module for programme staff within it has also been updated.

11. UNICEF has further integrated gender into humanitarian guidance and tools, including the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs), child protection cluster coordinator training, the programme guidance for disaster risk reduction, and revisions to emergency preparedness and response training. At the country level, a number of initiatives were undertaken to guide and train staff in these areas. In Afghanistan, for example, a briefing note with a focus on gender in emergency programming has been circulated to all cluster leads. The Nepal country office has included a "gender in emergency" orientation in its emergency training.

12. The roll-out of UNICEF-specific and inter-agency guidance was carried out in part through the relaunch of the Community of Practice on Gender and Humanitarian Action, which the Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS) continues to maintain and update. This community has approximately 190 members from 55 country and regional offices. In addition, the UNDP-UNICEF Community of Practice on Gender has close to 300 members, who access information and resources, discuss issues, and share experiences through this platform.

13. In compliance with the Gender Parity and Equality Policy, the Division of Human Resources tracks gender balance of staffing and ensures that due consideration is given to the equal representation of women and men at all professional levels. Based on this overall policy, a framework of supportive policies and practices has been adopted, including the staff selection policy and policies on maternity and paternity leave, breastfeeding and flexible working arrangements.

14. A comprehensive training curriculum was developed and piloted on Managing People at UNICEF: Policies and Practices. Course content focused on management accountability, including with regard to harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority; prevention of sexual exploitation; flexible work arrangements; and family-friendly policies and practices.

15. Technical competencies in 28 generic job profiles and job descriptions were revised and new job profiles developed to reflect the expected level of expertise to mainstream gender. This covered management positions at the country level, as well as all programme areas, social policy, communication and programme planning, monitoring and evaluation. For external technical expertise, a global gender roster was established by UNICEF in February 2010, as a one-stop shop for recruitment of gender experts. Links are also provided to regional rosters, as well as other external resources such as the Global Web Roster and the Gender Capacity Stand-by Project roster.[2] Five Regional Offices have developed their own gender rosters to complement the global roster.

16. UNICEF maintains an Intranet site on gender equality, which houses all key organizational reference documents and resources for staff to access. Some regional

[2] The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Gender Capacity Stand-by Project (GenCap) is a pool of gender advisers, at the P-4/P-5 levels, to be deployed on short notice to support the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator/Resident Coordinator, the humanitarian country teams and gender networks in the initial stages of humanitarian emergencies. The Norwegian Refugee Council is administering the project.

offices, such as MENARO and The Americas and the Caribbean Regional Office (TACRO) have also developed Intranet sites dedicated to gender equality resources and information. The newly redesigned gender equality portal on the UNICEF website has been launched, with information for the wider public on UNICEF work in this area.

17. UNICEF supports national capacities and efforts to collect and analyse sex-disaggregated data through the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS). The MICS framework also includes specific modules on key gender indicators, such as violence against women and girls and harmful practices (child marriage and female genital cutting). The improved data provide a strengthened basis to monitor progress towards achieving gender equality and the rights of women and girls.

Current performance

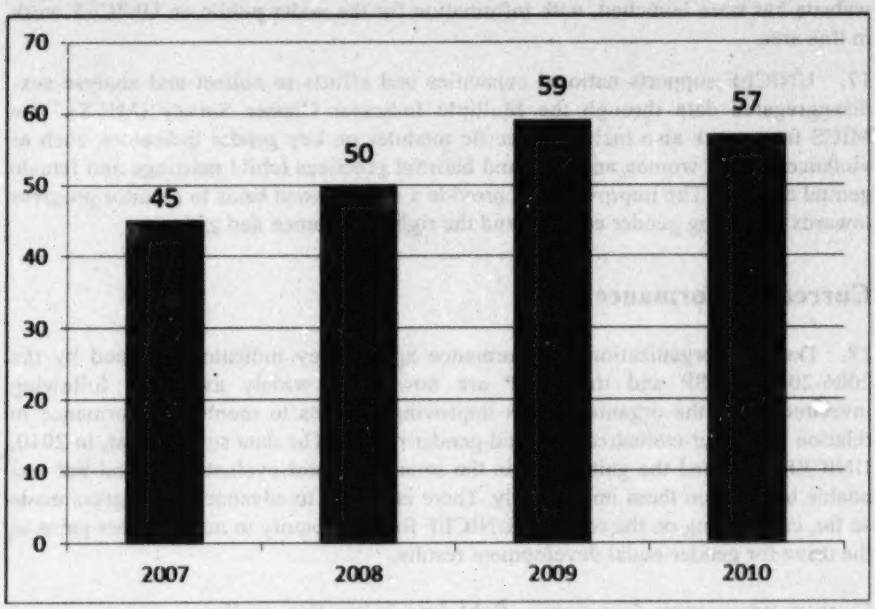
18. Data for organizational performance against key indicators adopted by the 2006-2013 MTSP and the SPAP are now more widely available, following investments by the organization in improving systems to monitor performance in relation to gender mainstreaming and gender results. The data suggest that, in 2010, UNICEF sustained the gains seen in the immediate post-evaluation period but was unable to build on them immediately. There is a need to advance the progress made so far, capitalizing on the renewed UNICEF focus on equity to make further gains in the drive for gender-equal development results.

Country programme documents: slight drop in meeting quality assurance standards

19. As in previous years, UNICEF in 2010 analysed country programme documents (CPDs) approved by the Executive Board by commissioning an external review of their conformity with the cross-cutting and foundation strategies of the MTSP. This external analysis found that the percentage of CPDs meeting gender mainstreaming and equality standards remained at just under 60 per cent — 57 per cent in 2010, compared to 59 per cent in 2009 — largely as a consequence of poor performance in 5 of the 19 cases.[3] This suggests a need to strengthen review processes for CPDs at the regional level. However, it is important to compare the levels achieved in 2009 and 2010 against the scores for 2007 and 2008, which were 45 per cent and 50 per cent, respectively. One area of consistent weakness that has significantly reduced the assessment scores for CPDs is the lack of adequate consideration of the roles of men and boys in development. With notable exceptions — the communication and advocacy efforts in Nicaragua or the targeted action to involve men in reproductive health services in Burundi — this is an area of widespread weakness in UNICEF. Guidance is being developed, to be widely disseminated by June 2011, in recognition of this. The issue is also addressed in the new detailed operational guidance for the five focus areas of the MTSP, and is an area where collaboration with UN-Women is expected to lead to improvement by UNICEF.

[3] See also the data companion to the 2011 annual report of the Executive Director.

Figure 1
Percentage of CPDs assessed as meeting organizational standards for application of gender mainstreaming



Gender reviews of country programmes: increase following issuance of executive directive

20. The number of countries that conducted reviews of gender mainstreaming in their programmes rose from 9 in 2007 and 2008 to 33 in 2009 and 34 in 2010. This significant increase in gender reviews followed the issuance of an executive directive asking country office representatives to prioritize undertaking these reviews, in compliance with the Programme Directive 2006-05 of June 2006. With this rapid acceleration, 85 country programme gender reviews have been carried out in the last four years, representing 67 per cent of all country programmes, against the target of 90 per cent or more by 2013.

Figure 2
Number of gender reviews of country programmes conducted per year

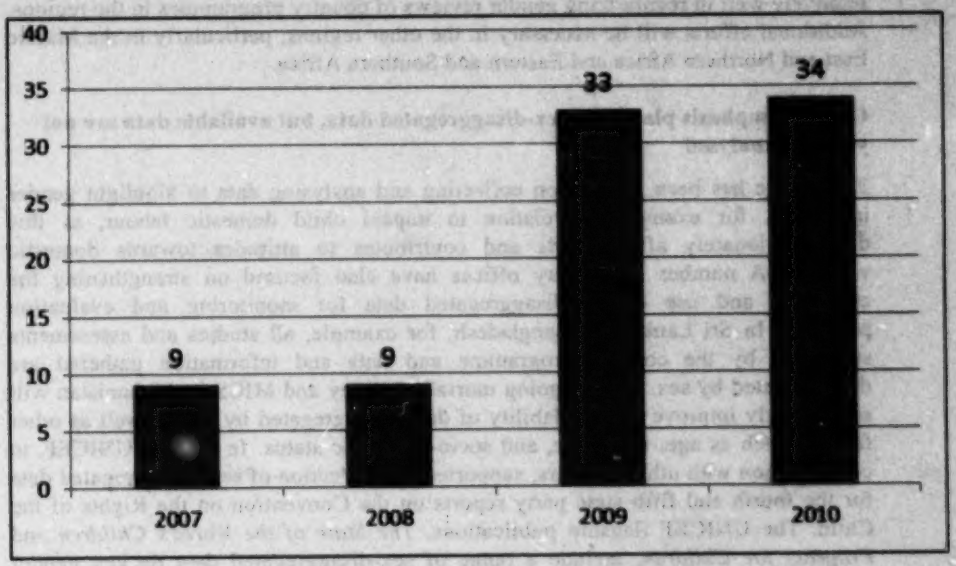
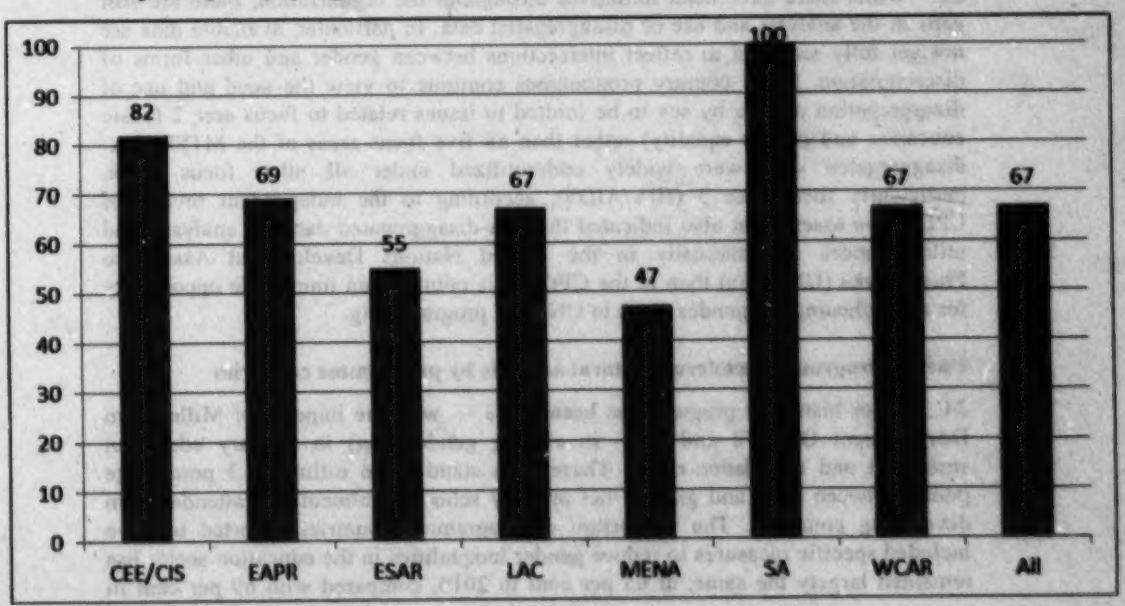


Figure 3
Percentage of country programmes for which a gender review was conducted in the past 4 years, by region



21. Based on annual report data, the Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS) and South Asia are performing relatively well in regularizing gender reviews of country programmes in the regions. Additional efforts will be necessary in the other regions, particularly in the Middle East and Northern Africa and Eastern and Southern Africa.

Greater emphasis placed on sex-disaggregated data, but available data are not yet fully analysed

22. There has been a focus on collecting and analysing data to highlight gender inequality, for example in relation to unpaid child domestic labour, as this disproportionately affects girls and contributes to attitudes towards domestic violence. A number of country offices have also focused on strengthening the collection and use of sex-disaggregated data for monitoring and evaluation purposes. In Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, for example, all studies and assessments supported by the country programme and data and information gathered are disaggregated by sex. The on-going mortality survey and MICS in Afghanistan will significantly improve the availability of data disaggregated by sex as well as other factors, such as age, residence, and socio-economic status. In Jordan, UNICEF, in collaboration with other partners, supported the collection of sex-disaggregated data for the fourth and fifth state party reports on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The UNICEF flagship publications, *The State of the World's Children* and *Progress for Children*, include a range of sex-disaggregated data on key gender indicators, based on MICS, the demographic and health surveys and other data sources. A forthcoming publication will analyse how gender gaps change over time as children reach adolescence.[4]

23. While there have been initiatives throughout the organization, there are still gaps in the analysis and use of disaggregated data. In particular, available data are not yet fully analysed to reflect intersections between gender and other forms of discrimination. Many country programmes continue to view the need and use of disaggregation of data by sex to be limited to issues related to focus area 2 (basic education and gender equality) rather than all five focus areas of the MTSP. Sex-disaggregated data were widely underutilized under all other focus areas, particularly focus area 3 (HIV/AIDS), according to the independent review of CPDs. The assessment also indicated that sex-disaggregated data are analysed and utilized more systematically in the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) than in the CPDs; this points to an immediate opportunity for strengthening the gender focus in UNICEF programming.

Uneven progress in gendered sectoral analysis by programme countries

24. Major historical progress has been made — with the impetus of Millennium Development Goals 2 and 3 — in closing gender gaps in primary education enrolment and attendance ratios. These gaps stand at an estimated 3 percentage points between boys and girls in net primary school enrolment and attendance in developing countries. The proportion of programme countries reported to have included specific measures to reduce gender inequalities in the education sector has remained largely the same, at 65 per cent in 2010, compared with 69 per cent in

[4] *Boys and girls in the life cycle: sex-disaggregated data on a selection of well-being Indicators, from early childhood to youth* (forthcoming).

2009. The number of countries with an up-to-date gender audit of the education sector plan remains low, at 22 per cent in 2010, up from 19 per cent in 2009. Since 2005, there has been a significant increase in gender analysis related to the water sector, primarily in the two regions of sub-Saharan Africa. Considerable disparities among males and females aged 15-24 years continue to persist in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia on knowledge to prevent HIV infection, despite rapid advances in integrating HIV/AIDS education in the national secondary-level curricula. The number of UNICEF-assisted country programmes with an up-to-date gender analysis of child protection issues remained relatively low, at 36 per cent in 2010, compared with 34 per cent in 2009. In child protection, almost half of all programme countries (48 per cent) have undertaken gender analysis of key child-protection issues and gender-sensitive measures to address discriminatory social norms.[5]

Gender equality issues addressed at the management level in country offices

25. Under the SPAP and as part of its benchmarking system, UNICEF now tracks how often gender equality was an agenda item in meetings of CMTs, and how many gender equality-focused statements UNICEF representatives make per year. In some regions, gender issues were included quite frequently as agenda items in CMTs during 2010. In country offices in South Asia, close to 5 agenda items on average were explicitly focused on gender equality or gender mainstreaming, and in East and Southern Africa, almost 3 agenda items focused on this area. In Latin America and the Caribbean, gender equality featured most often as the main topic of public statements made by representatives — close to 12 statements per country office during the year.

Gender mainstreaming: increase in staff conceptual knowledge but shortfalls in self-assessed practical knowledge regarding its application

26. The self-assessment of gender mainstreaming in UNICEF indicated that, compared with the previous year, the level of knowledge among staff with regard to gender mainstreaming increased in 2010. A much larger share of respondents was able to correctly define the concept of "gender mainstreaming" as practised in UNICEF — in 2010, some 78 per cent of respondents identified the correct definition while only 42 per cent were able to do so in 2009. However, there was not much change in terms of the perception among staff of their own knowledge and skills in incorporating gender issues in their work. Only half of respondents considered that they were completely or sufficiently qualified to mainstream gender equality in their work in 2010, well below the 75 per cent target in the SPAP. It is hoped that the roll-out of the new e-learning course on gender will go some way to improving these self-assessments among staff. Senior-level staff expressed greater confidence in their skills than staff as a whole, with 78 per cent stating in 2010 that they had the necessary knowledge and skills to mainstream gender. This reflects an increase over the previous year, when 67 per cent of senior level staff responded they had the needed knowledge and skills.

[5] See also the data companion to the 2011 annual report of the Executive Director.

Gender policy: Significant increase in familiarity with the new Policy

27. Results from the self-assessment indicate that, compared with 2009, considerably more staff are now familiar with the organization's new Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Girls and Women. In 2010, some 33 per cent of respondents said they were familiar with the gender policy of UNICF, while in 2009 only 13 per cent indicated they were familiar with the 1994 gender policy. This is likely attributable to the wide dissemination of the new policy within the organization, in a number of languages. While progress has clearly been made, further increasing this level of familiarity will be a focus of future efforts, including incorporating an orientation on the policy within programme process workshops.

Gender equality not systematically discussed as part of performance reviews

28. In 2010, only 6 per cent of respondents to the self-assessment indicated that they had discussed gender equality at length with their supervisors. In 2009, this figure was 8 per cent. When this question was posed to supervisors, a slightly higher proportion — 10 per cent — indicated that they had discussed gender equality at length with their supervisees during performance reviews, reflecting little change from 2009, when this figure wa. 12 per cent. UNICEF has updated its performance appraisal system, and this is providing an opportunity to encourage attention to performance on gender equality. The user guide for the updated electronic performance appraisal system now strongly encourages the inclusion of gender targets as well as gender-related training opportunities in managers' performance appraisals. In addition, the e-learning course on gender will be added as recommended training for the 2011 performance cycle for all staff.

Initial budget allocations for gender-equality results show wide variations among regions and MTSP key results

29. UNICEF developed the Gender Equality Marker (GEM) as a system to track resource allocations and expenditures that are made to advance gender equality or the empowerment of girls and women, based on the expected contribution of intermediate results to this goal.[6] The GEM involves rating every programme-budget-funded intermediate result against a four-category scale that ranges from "0" (not expected to contribute to gender equality in any noticeable way) to "3" (advancing gender equality as a principal objective of the result).

30. The first year and baseline for GEM benchmarks is 2011. Initial data show that, at present, approximately 44 per cent of programme budget allocations are assessed as contributing principally or significantly to gender-equality results. The target for 2012 is 75 per cent of programme budget allocations and expenditure. There was some variation in the initial figures among regions, with 26 per cent in Eastern and Southern Africa and 72 per cent in South Asia.

[6] The Gender Equality Marker was designed following a review of existing markers developed by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, UNDP, the Canadian International Development Agency and the IASC in relation to emergency contexts.

Figure 4
Programme budget allocations for gender equality results based on initial GEM ratings

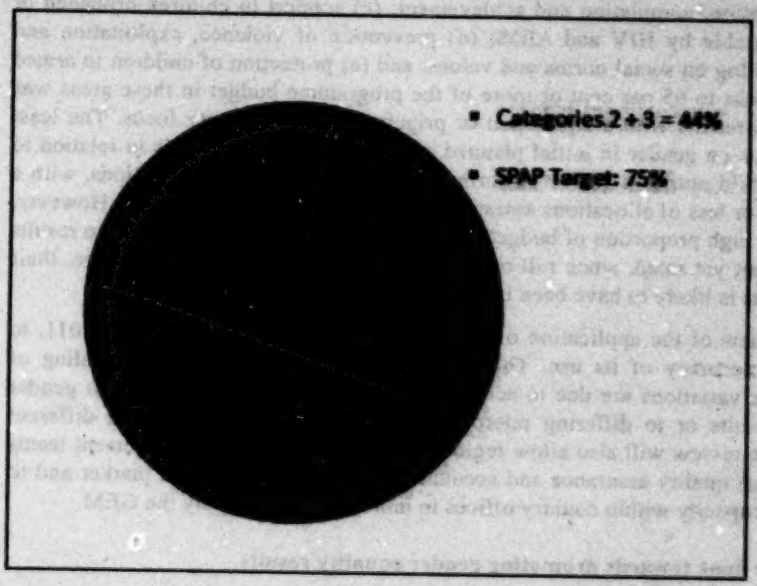
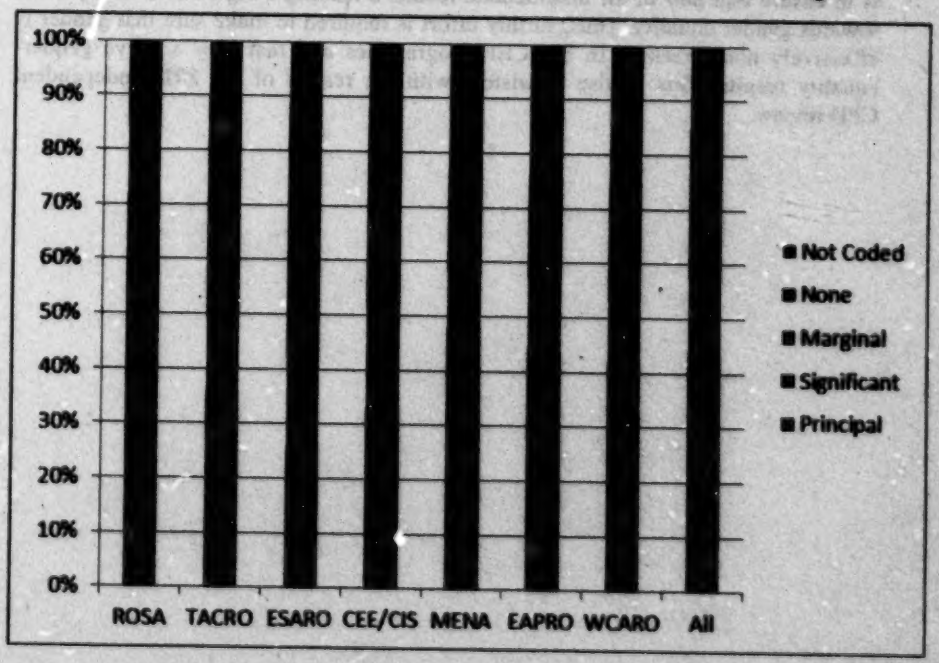


Figure 5
Regional breakdown of programme budget allocations based on GEM ratings



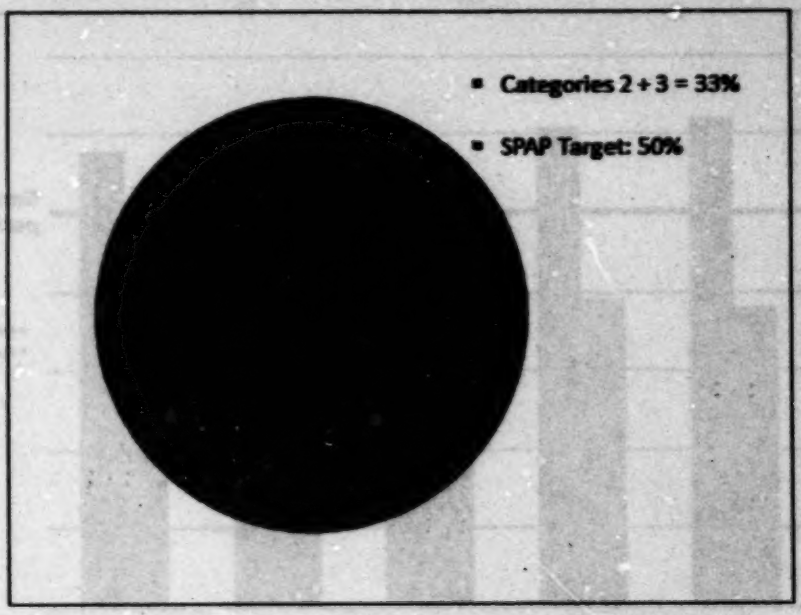
31. In terms of key result areas (KRAs) of the MTSP, the highest proportions of budget allocations for gender-equality results were in the following areas: (a) access to and use of water and sanitation; (b) improvement of educational quality and school retention, completion and achievement; (c) support to children orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV and AIDS; (d) prevention of violence, exploitation and abuse by acting on social norms and values; and (e) protection of children in armed conflict. Close to 65 per cent or more of the programme budget in these areas was allocated to results with a significant or principal gender equality focus. The least intense focus on gender in initial planned programme allocations was in relation to KRAs on child nutrition and on restoring education in post-crisis situations, with a 25 per cent or less of allocations assessed as having a strong gender focus. However, a relatively high proportion of budget allocations were made in these areas to results that were not yet rated, since roll-out of the GEM is ongoing and, therefore, their gender focus is likely to have been understated.

32. A review of the application of the marker will be conducted in mid-2011, to assess the accuracy of its use. This will also provide a better understanding of whether the variations are due to actual differences in focus with regard to gender equality results or to differing interpretations of which results merited different ratings. The review will also allow regional offices and regional management teams to strengthen quality assurance and accountability with regard to the marker and to help build capacity within country offices to more effectively apply the GEM.

More to be done towards promoting gender equality results

33. According to data based on the GEM gathered so far, approximately one third of programme-funded intermediate results promote gender equality. The SPAP target is to ensure that half of all intermediate results a making a significant contribution towards gender equality. Thus, further effort is required to make sure that gender is effectively mainstreamed in UNICEF programmes and that they achieve gender-equality results. This is also consistent with the results of the 2010 independent CPD review.

Figure 6
Intermediate results that promote gender-equality results



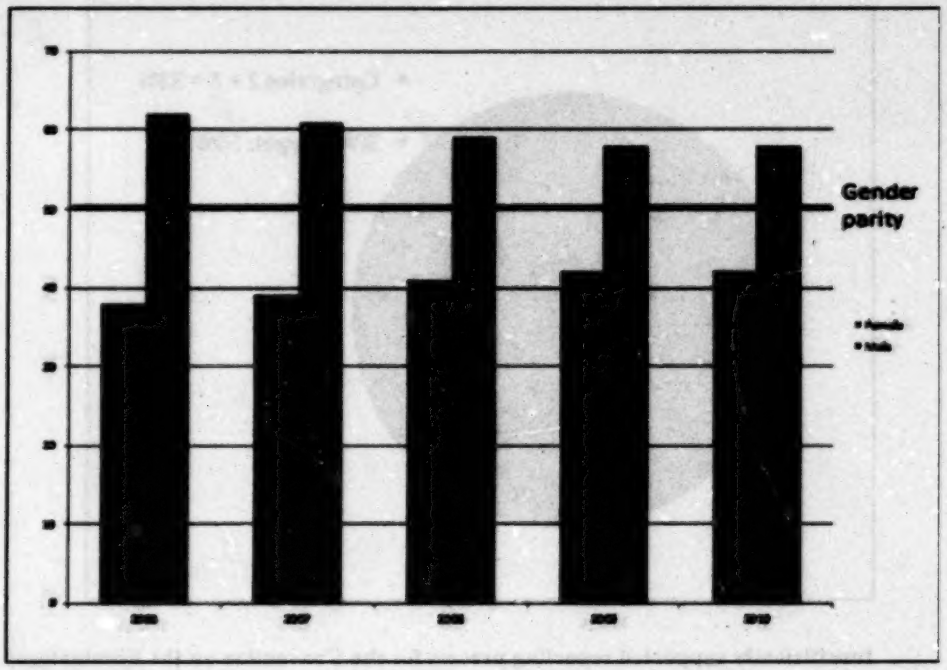
Insufficiently supported reporting process for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

34. Guidance for supporting the national reporting process for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, together with other members of the United Nations country teams (UNCTs), has been developed and disseminated to UNICEF country offices. However, while country offices have played a role in the reporting process through UNCTs in a number of countries, the percentage of offices having supported the most recent reporting process has remained unchanged from 2009, at 36 per cent, and is markedly lower than in the case of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Women continue to be underrepresented in senior-level posts

35. The gender profile of senior staff indicates that gender disparities persist in relation to senior-level posts. The gender gap for posts at the P5 level and above narrowed from 2006 to 2008 but there has been little change since then, with the share of women in these posts remaining at slightly above 40 per cent; for men, it is close to 60 per cent.

Figure 7
Percentage of male and female staff in senior level posts (P5 and above)



Not all country offices are yet fully equipped to respond to sexual exploitation and abuse cases

36. UNICEF is committed, on the basis of the SPAP, to ensuring that by 2012 all country offices have mechanisms in place to effectively handle cases of sexual exploitation and abuse by UNICEF staff and implementing partners, in line with the Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13) and the associated IASC implementation guidelines for the field. In South Asia, most country offices (close to 90 per cent) already have these mechanisms in place. Over 60 per cent of country offices in CEE/CIS, in East Asia and the Pacific, in Eastern and Southern Africa and in Latin America and the Caribbean, while approximately half of the country offices in the Middle East and Northern Africa and in West and Central Africa have such mechanisms. Greater efforts are needed to ensure that all offices are prepared by 2012 to respond to such cases should they arise.

Many visit the community of practice web site but active participation remains low

37. According to a survey conducted of community of practice members, approximately 86 per cent indicated they visit the web site a few times a month or more frequently. However, only a small proportion — 19 per cent — directly contribute (by posting queries or comments, submitting responses or blog posts, sharing a document or information on events) once a month or more.

Partnerships and emerging lessons

38. UNICEF continued its efforts to strengthen partnerships with others in the area of gender equality. The organization participated in key inter-agency forums on gender and humanitarian action, including the Task Force on Women, Peace and Security; United Nations Action on Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict; and the IASC Sub-Working Group on Gender, co-chaired by UNICEF. The organization took part in United Nations discussions on the establishment of UN-Women and seconded a senior staff member to the UN-Women transition team. UNICEF has worked in particularly close partnership with UNDP, UNFPA and UN-Women in promoting gender equality, including in developing the e-learning course on gender.

39. In an effort to harmonize the United Nations system support for the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the four agencies (UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and UN-Women) facilitate UNCTs reporting to the Committee during its pre-sessional working group meetings. Joint guidelines for UNCTs have been prepared, with inputs from other agencies, to serve as a basis for the joint reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. These efforts have improved the quality of information and analysis the Committee receives in identifying and making recommendations on issues for governments to address. In 2010, 13 UNCTs provided reports to the pre-sessional working group of the Committee. In Algeria and Comoros, for example, UNICEF played a leadership role within UNCTs to prepare the joint reports. In Nepal, the organization ensured that issues related to girls were included within the UNCT report.

40. Addressing gender-based violence, both in humanitarian and development contexts, was a particularly prominent area of work for UNICEF and in its partnerships through joint programmes. UNICEF worked to ensure that all country offices, based on the organization's mandate, take on a leadership role in this area. In 2010, UNICEF led or co-led cooperation to address gender-based violence in nine countries. Under the organization's leadership, the *Handbook for Coordinating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings* and the IASC-endorsed training package "Caring for Survivors of Sexual Violence in Emergencies" were produced. These tools aim to improve coordinated action to address gender-based violence in emergencies by enhancing the leadership of gender-based violence sub-clusters at the field level and the capacity of participating organizations to support programmes based on common standards. UNICEF, UN-Women and UN-Habitat have also initiated a partnership that aims to work with local government leaders in reducing violence against women and girls in major urban areas.

41. Since 2009, UNICEF has been contributing to the Secretary General's UNiTE campaign to end violence against women and girls through a unique partnership with private-sector organizations, four United Nations agencies and the United States Government to support national governments and civil society in tackling sexual violence against children, with a particular focus on girls.[7] The Together for Girls initiative is an innovative model that uses global advocacy across networks to

[7] Partners include the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Becton, Dickinson and Company, Grupo ABC, the Nduna Foundation, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UN-Women and UNICEF.

bring attention to the issue, mobilize technical expertise and, ultimately, resources to support country-driven efforts for change. The founding principle of Together for Girls is to generate robust data and evidence on sexual violence against children, with a focus on girls, to catalyse effective responses and foster positive change, under the leadership of governments. The initiative is structured around three pillars: (a) improved data on sexual violence and abuse of children; (b) support for comprehensive, cross-sectoral programming to prevent and respond to violence against children; and (c) an advocacy and communication campaign to increase awareness in society as a whole.

42. UNICEF is participating in 8 of the 13 joint programmes now being implemented under the Thematic Window for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment of the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund. These efforts contribute to achieving Goal 3 (promoting gender equality and women's empowerment) by adopting a comprehensive approach that addresses issues of access to opportunities and the guarantee of rights for women and girls. UNICEF is playing a significant role in supporting implementation under these joint programmes in a number of areas: (a) gender equality in access to employment; (b) addressing gender-based violence against women and girls; (c) prevention of domestic violence against women; (d) combating human trafficking; (e) promoting gender and racial equality; (f) developing gender-sensitive budgets; and (g) promoting women's participation in national processes. A meta-evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund programme will be conducted, with UNICEF participation, in 2011.

43. Initial lessons from the implementation of these joint programmes indicate that government leadership of programmes for gender results is a crucial element in ensuring effective implementation and sustainability of results. Integration of implementation strategies within national structures has also been identified as a key success factor. In addition, the involvement of women's organizations in these programmes is essential to ensuring that the views and knowledge of civil society are taken into account.

44. Coordination remains a challenge, although activities are being carried out jointly under the programmes. The roles of each individual agency often need to be clarified, particularly in relation to interaction with national counterparts. Attribution among agencies of gender-equality results achieved through the joint programmes is also a challenging area. Furthermore, baseline data for some indicators to monitor progress are not available, and documentation and reporting remain based largely on activities rather than results. Weak local institutions and limited relevant expertise have hampered programme implementation in some cases. However, the joint programmes have had a positive impact in some countries in building national capacity to mainstream gender strategies. In Namibia, for example, the Police Women and Child Protection Unit (WCPU), under the Ministry of Safety and Security, initiated a capacity-building programme for its staff on gender-based violence. According to WCPU officials, this contributed to the strengthening of national and regional systems for combating gender-based violence.[8]

[8] http://www.mdgfund.org/jointprogrammidtermevaluation (accessed on 25 March 2011).

45. UNICEF carried out, in collaboration with UN-Women, an action-learning exercise on experience from joint programming on gender equality in Albania, Morocco and Nepal. This initiative underlined the central role of extended gender theme groups — those including national partners — as a mechanism for improving coordination of gender-equality programmes within the United Nations system and among national agencies to more effectively advance gender-equality efforts. The inclusion of women's movement leaders in this process was also found to have a positive impact. In addition, opportunities for reflection to look critically and analytically at the functioning of the gender theme groups, which is part of the action learning process, was identified as an important element for strengthening their practice.[9] The findings from this exercise will be presented as part of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

46. UNICEF has been widely involved in interagency efforts to improve gender statistics and analysis. The organization is part of the Interagency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics, working to develop a set of core gender indicators for global reporting. In addition, UNICEF is collaborating with UNFPA, the UN Statistics Division and UN-Women to produce a manual on gender analysis of census data. The aim is to provide national statistics offices, as well as civil society organizations and other partners, with a comprehensive orientation on how to effectively analyse census data through a gender lens.

47. UNICEF has also strengthened its partnership with a range of international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), particularly with respect to promoting the rights of girls. Among other initiatives, UNICEF has been a member of the advisory panel for Plan International's report series, "*Because I am a Girl*". UNICEF has also worked closely with the Working Group on Girls of the NGO Committee on UNICEF to strengthen joint advocacy on issues related to girls.

Way Forward

48. The explicit and intensive focus by UNICEF on pursuing equity in development results provides a major opportunity to advance UNICEF organizational performance in gender mainstreaming and to make more effective and systematic contributions to gender-inclusive results and to the closing of gender gaps across all sectors covered by the Millennium Development Goals, at local, national and international levels. Rooted in the UNICEF Mission Statement and the foundation strategies of the 2006-2013 MTSP (a human rights-based approach to cooperation and gender mainstreaming), the renewed organizational focus on equity is now providing an ideal platform for embedding gender-focused programming, analysis and advocacy in all aspects of UNICEF work, across all regions. At the same time, UNICEF will need to ensure that gender inequalities receive due and appropriate attention in the wider strategies and results pursued as part of its overall focus on addressing the needs and rights of the most deprived children and communities.

[9] "Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: A United Nations Development Group-Sponsored Action Learning Programme (2009-2010). Draft Final Report on Results and Lessons Learned", UNICEF and UN-Women, December 2010.

49. The equity focus of UNICEF and, more specifically, the SPAP are key to ensuring that the progress achieved so far is maintained and expanded. UNICEF will make full use of its leadership focus on equity, as well as the tools, procedures and guidance that have been introduced in response to the gender evaluation, to further systematize its performance.

50. The improved performance monitoring systems of UNICEF suggest a number of priority areas for further attention: (a) strengthened quality assurance for key planning documents at the country and regional levels; (b) continued organizational investment in gender reviews of country programmes of cooperation; (c) improved analysis of data relating to gender, in particular with regard to relationships between gender and other forms of discrimination; (d) expanded familiarity of UNICEF staff with the new gender policy and methods for its systematic application; (e) greater attention to gender equality in staff performance reviews; and (f) successful application and use of the new Gender Equality Marker.

51. In all areas that have been identified as needing improvement, UNICEF will build upon the mechanisms established following the 2008 gender evaluation, complemented by increased efforts to interact and collaborate with a range of development partners and to learn from their good practices and innovation. The organization will also take advantage of the new opportunities for cooperation for gender-equality results and national capacity development for gender-balanced development provided by the establishment of UN-Women, particularly in the context of the "Keeping the Promise" outcome document of the United Nations General Assembly and the international human rights framework. UNICEF recognizes the potential for a powerful application of knowledge and experience from a range of sectors and leading partners working on gender and development, including development banks and NGOs, and will invest in strengthening linkages to such external knowledge as a primary means of building upon its achievements.

Annex

Focus on adolescent girls

UNICEF has established a strategic focus across the organization on adolescent girls, in recognition of the heightened discrimination faced by girls at this stage of their lives and as a response to the lack of adequate investment in their development and protection. It has contributed to efforts to promote the rights of adolescent girls both at the global and country levels. The 2011 *State of the World's Children* focuses on adolescence, emphasizing the importance of these years in girls' and boys' lives in breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty. The report notes that investing particularly in adolescent girls is known to have far-reaching impacts on their own lives and that of their families and communities. The report also includes the first data table on key indicators related to adolescents, including child marriage, domestic violence, and age at first birth, which mostly affect adolescent girls. UNICEF is a member of the United Nations Adolescent Girls Task Force, joining forces with the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNFPA, UN-Women and the World Health Organization. The Task Force is supporting national programmes based on UNDAF priorities and processes in Ethiopia, Liberia, Malawi and Guatemala to empower girls to voice their concerns, to become leaders in their communities and participate in policy making. The programmes will involve a variety of partners at the local level, including civil society organizations. Mechanisms are being developed to document good practice and lessons learned from these initiatives.

Examples of country-level efforts to promote the rights of adolescent girls include an initiative in Uganda where UNICEF is supporting the development of an adolescent girls index to better gauge their vulnerability and identify the parts of the country in which girls are affected the worst, in order to help focus interventions. The index is based on a number of key variables relating to the level of education of adolescent girls', their exposure to multiple sexual partners and their having given birth. In Tanzania, UNICEF, along with other agencies, will be carrying out a rapid situation analysis on adolescent girls as part of a joint initiative under the "Delivering as One" framework. The situation analysis aims to build the evidence base to support the implementation of strategic interventions to address their rights. In Brazil, UNICEF supported an existing network of afro-descendant adolescent girls who acted as community leaders to address the increasing feminization of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. To ensure that teen mothers return to school and complete their education, UNICEF has supported the Ministry of Education in Namibia to develop a new policy aimed at enhancing institutional capacity to provide psycho-social, health and nutritional services to young mothers. To promote HIV prevention among adolescent female sex workers in Ukraine, UNICEF has provided girls living on the street with mobile phones to provide counselling over the phone and as a means for them to seek help in emergency situations.